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CROSS-SECTORAL ISSUES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman

Demographic dynamics and sustainability

(Chapter 5 of Agenda 21)

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development took note of the report of the Secretary-General on demographic dynamics and sustainability (E/CN.17/1996/10 and Corr.1 and Add.1), which included information on a broad range of factors that have been shown to have had significant impact on demographic variables and on population and sustainable development policies in general, taking into account the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). 1/ The Commission acknowledged the importance of actions taken by Governments in support of the formulation and implementation of national population policies and programmes. The Commission noted with satisfaction that greater importance is being attached to population questions and to the need to integrate population factors into environment and development planning, according to information obtained from field offices by the Task Force on ICPD Implementation of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The Commission also welcomed the activities and measures undertaken by non-governmental organizations and members of the United Nations system as follow-up to chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and chapter III of the ICPD Programme of Action.

1/ See Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

2. In view of the continuing relevance of the proposals made at its third session, the Commission reaffirmed the decisions made at that session on the further implementation of chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and chapter III of the ICPD Programme of Action.

3. The Commission encourages Governments, regional and international organizations and non-governmental organizations to continue to develop, conduct or support research studies on gender-sensitive analysis and the linkages between population, poverty, consumption and production, environment and natural resources, education and health as a guide to effective sustainable development.

4. In order to give greater visibility to the critical linkages between population issues and developmental and environmental issues, and to increase people's understanding of such linkages, the Commission encourages Governments and non-governmental organizations, and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, to formulate and implement effective information, education and communication strategies that take into account such linkages, thereby creating the necessary conditions for the rapid achievement of the goals of Agenda 21 and the ICPD Programme of Action.

5. The Commission underlines the importance of the full and equal participation of women in all aspects of sustainable development planning and programmes, as called for in the Beijing Platform for Action, 2/ and emphasizes the need for Governments to integrate women, on an equal basis with men, in decision-making regarding sustainable resource management and the development of policies and programmes for population and sustainable development. The Commission urges Governments, United Nations system organizations and non-governmental organizations to mainstream a gender perspective, including gender-sensitive analysis, inter alia, as an essential step in the development and monitoring of sustainable development policies.

6. The Commission suggest to the Economic and Social Council that it examine the division of labour between the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development in the future consideration of the issue of population and sustainable development, taking into account the link between chapter 5 of Agenda 21 and chapter 3 of the ICPD Programme of Action.

2/ Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.